



Arizona Department of Public Safety

- For Immediate Release -

Wednesday, July 9, 2008

Arizona Department of Public Safety Officer injured in early morning collision on I-10

On July 9, 2008, at 1:44 a.m., an Arizona Department of Public Safety Officer was involved in a two vehicle collision on eastbound Interstate 10 at 83rd Avenue.

The DPS Officer was in the process of entering the freeway from the eastbound on ramp to I-10 to conduct a traffic break for a wide load which was carrying an Air Force T-38 training jet. As he entered the freeway his patrol vehicle was struck by a white mini-van driven by 45-year old Ricardo Melendez Hernandez. The driver was taken into custody and transported to a DPS sub-station where he was processed and arrested for DUI. The mini-van was also occupied by a female and an infant that left the scene. Their names are unknown.

The injured DPS Officer is Reserve Sergeant Ray Buttes who retired from DPS after 35 years of service but now works as a reserve sergeant. He was transported to a local hospital with non-life threatening injuries. We have no further updates on his condition at this time.

Five lanes of I-10 eastbound were closed from approximately 2:30 a.m. until 6:55 a.m. while DPS Vehicular Crimes Unit conducted an investigation. DPS was assisted with the lane closure by the ADOT Traffic Alert Team.

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